

**CoCoRaHS**

**January, 2009**

Thanks to everyone for your continued participation in Tennessee CoCoRaHS! The BEST of the BEST!

[I've posted the December precipitation totals map and an Annual total map that can be opened in](#)

[Google](#)

[Earth](#). There were over 250 sites with at least 95% of available observations in December and almost 200 sites reporting 90% of the time for the entire year! You folks are GREAT!

I've copied a couple of short articles that should be of interest; one on the growing economic impact of corn and another on winter preparations. This might be the year we see real snow in Tennessee.

Sorry to have missed an eNewsletter for December but the sick bug bit me and I'm not caught up yet.

Looking forward to another outstanding year with excellent volunteers.

Ralph

## Corn & Climate

With skyrocketing petroleum costs, a growing demand for biofuels, an unstable economy and a warming global climate, now is a time of unprecedented turbulence in the agriculture industry. At its epicenter? Corn. In response, NOAA co-sponsored the "Corn and Climate" workshop at Iowa State University in Ames on September 10th, 2008. The workshop was part of the 6th annual Biobased Industry Outlook Conference, with keynote speaker Congresswoman Herseth Sandlin (South Dakota). Through the efforts of the NOAA Central Region Collaboration Team, the workshop addressed climatic impacts and needs in the United States Corn Belt.

Participants discussed topics such as sustainable practice, bioeconomy, global warming, carbon credits and climatic impacts on agriculture. Researchers and producers expressed



concern about climatic extremes and disasters, and requested a faster, more effective information-sharing system. They also asked for regionally-focused climate models and a better understanding of drought impacts.

Participants included NOAA (NWS, NCDC, and ESRL), the U.S. Climate Change Program, International Research Institute (IRI), five State Climatologists, nine universities, the National Drought Mitigation Center, several state departments of agriculture, the Farm Bureau, environmental groups, corn and soybean associations and individual producers. The workshop was the beginning of a large-scale effort, and future plans call for a drought early warning workshop and an exploration of the impact of corn on climate and water quantity. Watch for new opportunities to collaborate on this key topic.

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## Winter Storm Guide

With colder temperatures and wintry precipitation looming, now is the time to prepare for winter's onslaught of snow, frigid temperatures and dangerous driving conditions. Here are simple steps you can take to help keep you and your family safe during winter weather:

### For home:

- Prepare a storm safety kit with flashlights, matches, first-aid supplies and other items. See a full list at: [www.weather.gov/om/winterstorm/winterstorms.pdf](http://www.weather.gov/om/winterstorm/winterstorms.pdf)
- Keep enough supplies in the house for three days. Include no-cook, high-energy snack foods, plenty of water, extra medicine and baby items.
- Winterize your home. Clear rain gutters, insulate walls and pipes, keep heating tanks full, and have an alternate heat source ready (space heater/fireplace).
- Create and implement a family disaster plan. For more information, check out: <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/disasterguide/>

### For your car:

- Inspect and winterize your vehicle. Install snow tires and always keep your gas tank near full.
- Keep your mobile phone charged and buy a car charger.
- Pack an auto winter storm survival kit with items like blankets, a flashlight, a first-aid kit, snack food, water, extra clothing, a windshield scraper and a shovel. More tips at: [www.weather.gov/om/winterstorm/winterstorms.pdf](http://www.weather.gov/om/winterstorm/winterstorms.pdf)
- Check forecasts and always let someone know your estimated time of arrival (ETA) and route.



Now you're ready for anything! For the latest forecasts and complete information on winter storm preparation, check out: <http://www.weather.gov/om/winter/index.shtml>.